

(Monroe Institute Blog - February 15, 2024)

IT ALL COMES BACK TO BREATH

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Malorie Mackey is an actress, host, and writer living in Los Angeles, CA. Malorie's first book was published in 2017 and her short story "What Love Has Taught Me" has been published in the anthology "Choices." You can find Malorie's travel content on dozens of digital media platforms. Check out www.maloriesadventures.com for more. Malorie's adventures don't just encompass physical adventures. She has been a student of intuition since she was a teenager, studying at Edgar Cayce's A.R.E. In 2019, Malorie discovered the Monroe Institute while filming her travel show. Since then, she has been studying the art and science of consciousness through many different programs and life experiences.

In my latest adventures in meditation, specifically while taking **Starlines** at the Monroe Institute, I had a wonderful experience while focusing on my breath. It seems silly and obvious to point out, but our breath is one of the most important building blocks of our lives. It is, after all, essential ... but it's so much more. Breathing can be refreshing, powerful and invigorating ... and it can be used to completely change our mood on a dime. Having worked as an actor for most of my life, I can verify that if I want to cry or act terrified in a scene, my first go-to trick is increasing my breath. By controlling my breathing and making it quicker and more labored, I put myself in a state where it's easy to begin crying. The same goes for being angry, when breathing becomes more deliberate, harder and more passionate.

In a similar vein, calming breaths can be a refreshing lifesaver to ease a bad mood quickly and purposefully. It's common when someone gets heated to be advised to take a beat to *breathe*. When you find yourself losing composure, one of the easiest things you can do is step back, slowly breathe in and breathe out a few times until you have a better grasp of your emotional state.

When I was diagnosed with a panic disorder a few years ago, my doctor told me about several breathing techniques for when my heart rate starts to climb. Learning to manage my breath has actually helped me to lower my heart rate in situations where I began to lose control. (This may not be the case for everyone, but it has worked for me.) My point is that your breath is deeply connected to your headspace. As you experience your day, your breath changes with your thoughts and emotions effortlessly, and typically without notice. This is why breathwork is an essential element of a meditation practice. Controlling your breath is at the core of each meditation you do because finding that peaceful, calming breath can quickly ease you into altered states of consciousness. It's why I start each meditation by taking a few breaths. This is something I've always subconsciously and instinctively done, but it wasn't until my revelation in Starlines that I realized on a more conscious level why foundational breathwork is so important.

I encourage you at the start of each meditation—and at the start of each day, too—to take a few calming breaths. I recommend you sit up, take a nice full breath into your lungs, and with it, imagine healing energy coming in. Then after holding it for a few seconds, release the breath along with anything that may not be serving you. Do this a few times and remember that it can be an essential key to success if you find yourself emotionally escalating during the day. It all comes back to breath, in life and meditation, and the more we can consciously manage it, the smoother our lives can become.